



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

February 25, 2005

News Release

HOMELAND SECURITY AGENTS LOCATE UNDERGROUND BORDER TUNNEL

CALEXICO, Calif. – Agents with the Department of Homeland Security have launched an investigation following the discovery of an underground tunnel near the international border in east Calexico. Early this morning, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Border Patrol Agents located a three-foot by three-foot wooden shaft some 20 feet underground.

After finding the tunnel, CBP referred the case to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents to initiate a formal investigation. Inside the tunnel, agents from the two agencies found rubber tubing that may have been used for ventilation and fiber shingles that were apparently employed to shore up the tunnel's walls.

Mexican authorities have been notified and are working closely with the Department of Homeland Security in the ongoing investigation. Officials from both countries are trying to pinpoint where the tunnel originated and where it may come up on the U.S. side.

The tunnel discovered today is located approximately 75 yards east of another suspicious area excavated last week by CBP agents. It is the third cross border tunnel uncovered in the Calexico area within the last 15 months.

“Our primary mission is to prevent terrorism and terrorist weapons from entering our country,” said El Centro Chief Patrol Agent Carl McClafferty. “We are vigorously working to uncover all possible entry points within our area of responsibility to maintain operational control of the border and meet our mission goal: protecting America.”

“This is a great example of Department of Homeland Security entities working together to strengthen and secure our nation's security.,” said Michael Unzueta, ICE San Diego Special Agent-in-Charge. “Our shared goal is to protect our country from those who could potentially do us harm.”

ICE